

Incredible Shrinking Son of Man: How Reliable Is the Gospel Tradition?

Robert M. Price



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"This book should be mandatory reading for all scholars concerned with Christian origins ... nothing of comparable importance has been written for at least a decade." - Freethinker

For more than a century scholars have been examining the Gospels and other traditions about the life of Jesus to determine their historical accuracy. Although the results of these scholarly efforts are sometimes controversial, the consensus among researchers today is that the four Evangelists' accounts cannot be taken at face value. In fact, a team of more than 100 scholars called the Jesus Seminar has come to the conclusion that on average only about 18 percent of the four Gospels is historically accurate.

An active member of the Jesus Seminar, Dr. Robert M. Price presents the fruits of this important historical research in this fascinating discussion of early Christianity. As the title suggests, Price is none too optimistic about the reliability of the Gospel tradition as a source of accurate historical information about the life of Jesus. Indeed, he feels that his colleagues in the Jesus Seminar are much too optimistic in their estimate of authentic material in the Gospels. After an introduction to the historical-critical method for nonspecialists and a critique of the methods used by the Jesus Seminar, Price systematically discusses the narrative and teaching materials in the Gospel, clearly presenting what is known and not known about all of the major episodes of Jesus' life. He also examines the parables for authenticity as well as Jesus' teachings about the Kingdom of God, repentance, prayer, possessions and poverty, the Atonement, and many other features of the Gospels.

Written for the general reading public in a lively and accessible style, Dr. Price's highly informative discussion will be of interest to anyone who has wondered about the origins of Christianity.

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